

# CASE STUDY

Lazio Region (IT) – Zhengzhou (CN)

IURC – China



DECEMBER 18- 2023

**Thematic Network(s): Ecological Transition & Green Deal**

**Thematic Cluster(s): Sustainable Urban Agriculture – Agrofood Chain**

**Cross-cutting challenge(s): Climate Change**

**Topic keywords: Organic Farm, Multifunctional (peri-)Urban Farming**

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# Organic Agriculture

*The Lazio Region – Zhengzhou cooperate on the sustainability and competitiveness of local organic agriculture.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Both EU and China policies promote **sustainable and safe agri-food supply**, supporting urban-rural integrated development and knowledge-driven innovation for sustainable agriculture.

The agri-food productions in the Lazio region are deeply embedded in the region's natural and cultural values. The agricultural landscape is immersed in a network of pre-existing historical sites, monuments, villas, and farmhouses. The agri-food system interacts with urban, agricultural, and environmental issues, particularly encouraging the local food production, trading and consumption network.

Zhengzhou faces challenges in (peri-)urban agriculture, including economic viability, biodiversity conservation, knowledge barriers, and citizen participation. The Lazio Region's experience with sustainable farming and the Slow Food movement offers valuable perspectives for addressing these challenges.

Over the past years, the Lazio region has encouraged multi-functional and organic farms. Among 70,000 farms in the region, about 450 are multifunctional farms, and more than 30 of them are organic farms, 23% of agricultural land is cultivated organically.

The Lazio Region and Zhengzhou cooperation promote regional dialogue, knowledge sharing, and innovation in sustainable and safe agri-food supply. This leads to sustainability and competitiveness in **local organic agriculture, cultural heritage protection, upskilling and job creation**.





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# MAIN CHALLENGE AND SOLUTION

The (peri-)urban agriculture in Zhengzhou faces challenges in achieving economic viability while balancing biodiversity, expanding organic farming practices, overcoming knowledge barriers, and sustaining community participation.

The Lazio Region in Italy has long been supporting agricultural cooperatives that prioritize sustainable farming, healthy food production, and environmental preservation. The region has expertise in developing an urban agriculture model that emphasizes ecological concerns, respects labour, and highlights the social value of agriculture. It collaborates with the Slow Food movement in Italy.



Lazio Region and Zhengzhou cooperation on Sustainable Agriculture and Agri-food System includes several key initiatives. A cooperation framework agreement was signed, with both regions' commitment to regional dialogue, knowledge sharing, fostering innovation in sustainable and safe agri-food supply, and addressing related issues such as heritage protection, agri-tourism, upcycling, and carbon sequestration. With knowledge exchange activities such as study visits, forums, conferences, and training programmes, these initiatives aim to promote sustainable and safe agri-food supply.

**“The shared interest and cooperative engagement are acknowledged. Essential is the allocation of required resources and in-depth dialogue with local stakeholders.”** Rita Merkle



# RESULTS AND IMPACT

The cooperation between Lazio Region and Zhengzhou achieves positive outcomes in terms of sustainable agriculture, food safety, environmental protection, and economic development for the benefit of both regions.

1. Enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of **local organic agriculture**.
2. Promote **circular economy principles in agriculture**, which is crucial for mitigating climate change impacts.
3. The establishment of a long-term cooperation mechanism and direct communication channels facilitates **mutual learning and capacity building**.
4. Joint actions focus on **integrating existing knowledge and resources** to develop peri-urban agriculture
5. The "**triple-helix**" approach can drive technological advancements, **education and job creation**.



## KEY FIGURES

4

working sessions on key topics of agri-food supply chains

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training programmes on peri-urban agriculture, sustainable supply of urban food, and urban agriculture

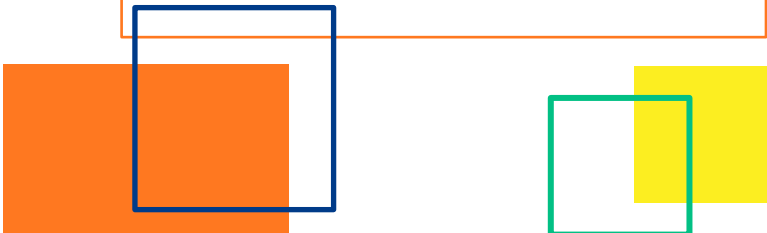
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demonstration field for carbon sequestration and emission reduction in organic farming

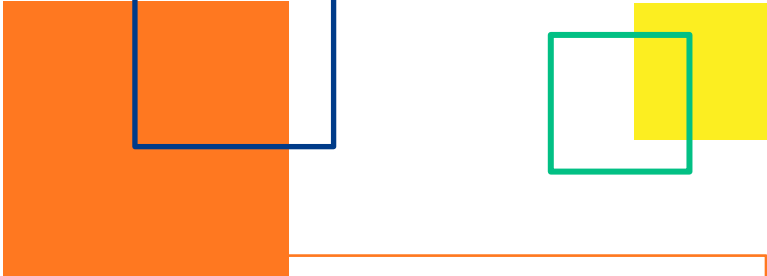


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# LESSONS **LEARNED**



**Long term cooperation between different regions is important to achieve common goals.**



**Investing in scientific knowledge is key to achieving sustainable agriculture, rural resilience, and food security.**



**A multi-faceted approach is essential, integrating economic, social, and environmental aspects in agriculture.**

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# THE IURC PROGRAMME

The International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) programme enables cities in different global regions to link up and share solutions to common problems. It is part of a long-term strategy by the European Union to foster sustainable urban development in cooperation with the public and private sectors, as well as representatives of research and innovation, community groups and citizens. Through engaging in IURC, cities will have the chance to share and exchange knowledge with their international counterparts, building a greener, more prosperous future.

The IURC programme is an opportunity for local governments to learn from each other, set ambitious targets, forge lasting partnerships, test new solutions, and boost their city's international profile. Its activities will support the achievement of policy objectives as well as major international agreements on urban development and climate change, such as the EU Urban Agenda, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement.

## Author:

**Keru Feng**, IURC China

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## Links to related outputs:

[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/china/sustainability-one-green-agricultural-co-operation-between-lazio-and-zhengzhou\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/china/sustainability-one-green-agricultural-co-operation-between-lazio-and-zhengzhou_en)